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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/S:STHIBEAULT AND  
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBURGEOIS, DBENZE AND  
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA RWINCHESTER  
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC  
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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: Damascus Media Reaction: Israeli Operation in Lebanon,  
Syria/Qatar (8/1)

¶1. Summary: Syrian papers reported that President Asad addressed the Syrian armed forces on July 31 in a speech published in "The People's Army" magazine, marking the 61st anniversary of the foundation of the Syrian Army. Asad said that the anniversary is

being observed this year "amid international circumstances and regional challenges that call for vigilance, awareness and readiness as the genocidal war waged by the Israeli enemy on our brave people in Lebanon and Palestine becomes more vicious." Asad added that "brotherly Lebanon is under flagrant aggression by the Israeli war machine by air, land and sea, perpetrating the ugliest forms of killing, destruction and sabotage against innocent unarmed people and infrastructure, in defiance of all international laws, charters, and human and moral principles, and supported by the powers of hegemony in the world. Those powers have stood by the aggressors, justifying their actions and providing them with the means to go ahead with their destruction." President Asad said that "these aggressions, killings and acts of destruction committed by the Israelis are nothing but a pre-meditated plot in collaboration with a number of superpowers which dominate international society, disabling it and confiscating its legitimacy, resolutions and institutions to kill the will of life and freedom." He added that "their plot is to undermine all aspirations of resistance, dismember the region and inflict moral defeat before geographic defeat as part compensation for the humiliating defeat and departure from south Lebanon under the blows of the resistance." The President said that "this is the time of national public resistance which has been able to humiliate the occupiers in Iraq, Palestine and today in Lebanon, proving to the world that the might of right is stronger than the might of unjust power." President Asad stressed that Israel is the party that started the aggression by capturing land before individuals. "Israel detains thousands of prisoners in its jails; it is the party which occupies Arab lands in Palestine, the Golan and south Lebanon." He stressed that "all shouts of threat and warning launched by the powers of hegemony, which support the aggression, will not affect us or force us to abandon the march of liberation or stop backing our brothers and the resistance." The President instructed all Syrian armed forces to be prepared, saying that "with our belief that martyrdom is the way of freedom and victory, we have to be

confident that every effort and each drop of sweat spent now in training will in the future spare a drop of blood when it is time to do so. Our battle will be continuous so long as our land is occupied and our rights are usurped, and victory is coming, God willing."

Syrian papers also reported Foreign Minister Walid al-Mouallem's visit to Doha carrying a message from President Asad to the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al-Thani, about the tense situation in the region caused by the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. Al-Mouallem will also hold talks with senior Qatari officials.

Papers also reported Lebanese President Lahoud's interview with Al-Jazeera TV, warning against dispatch of international forces to Lebanon, saying that such forces cannot end the resistance and will only destroy Lebanon. "France's calls to send forces to Lebanon aim at increasing French influence in Lebanon. Americans also want to send their forces. Only UN forces will guarantee the preservation of peace on the borders", Lahoud added.

End of summary.

## 12. Selected Headlines:

"President Asad addresses Syrian armed forces in a speech marking the 61st anniversary of the foundation of the Syrian Army, expressing Syria's support for the brave Lebanese national resistance, stressing Syria's support for Lebanon" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/1)

"A message from President Asad to the Emir of Qatar asserting importance of mobilizing efforts to form an international committee to investigate the Israeli massacres" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/1)

"The National Leadership of Al-Baath Party calls on Arab and foreign parties to support the Lebanese and Palestinian people: America underestimates international legitimacy and supports Israel's brutality" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/1)

"Information Minister Bilal reviews with Italian Foreign Minister D'Alema the dangerous situations in the region and means of reaching an immediate ceasefire" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/1)

"Lebanese President: Any multinational forces will cause sedition among Lebanese. We support maintaining UNIFIL troops in agreement with the Lebanese government" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/1)

"The US gives Israel more time to destroy what remains of Lebanon. Israeli Prime Minister Olmert is determined to continue aggression, admits big losses" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/1)

"A sit-in conducted by Syrian and Lebanese women in Damascus: Stop shedding innocent blood in Lebanon" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/1)

## 13. Editorial Block Quotes:

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"Responsibility for the Massacre"  
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Muhammad Khair al-Jammali, an editorialist in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (8/1): "The killing of civilians in the south Lebanese village of Qana is an organized crime showing once again that Israel is a criminal state, adopting crime as an official policy and a tool to achieve its unconcealed hostile objectives against the Arabs....

"Israel is the first and last source of threat to regional stability and world peace.... The international community must break its silence and apply the provisions of Chapter Seven of the UN Charter against Israel because it is not qualified to live peacefully in a world that seeks peace....

"Allies in the aggression against Lebanon are accomplices to the Qana crime.... The United Nations and human rights institutions must investigate the Qana massacre and bring Israeli and American officials to trial as war criminals for perpetrating it....

"Bush and his administration are directly responsible for the crime because they are the ones who gave the green light to the aggression and who supplied Israel with the tools of the crime, in the form of internationally prohibited weapons....

"We know that the aim of the crime was to terrorize the Lebanese people so that they will not continue to embrace the national resistance, and to take revenge against the resistance for the bitter defeat it inflicted upon Israel, its arrogance and its army. But the Lebanese people, who have experienced the Zionist enemy and its malice, spite, and racist hatred, will remain steadfast in the face of the aggression, supporting their heroic resistance with all elements of power and victory...."

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"Two Options Only"  
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Dr. Khalaf al-Jarrad, Chief Editor of government-owned Tishreen, wrote (8/1): "Planners, strategists, and decision-makers in Israel and its supporters must read the history and nature of the Arab region, as this will help them understand that their brutal wars, destruction, and collective killing of our people in Iraq, Palestine, and Lebanon will be of no use to them and will not force our nation to surrender. On the contrary, they

will drive millions of Arabs in their various countries to join the resistance, carry weapons, and fight Zionism. They will trigger formidable popular eruptions in many countries against those who collude with the enemy or remain silent about the aggression, those who search for excuses and justifications for the enemy's crimes against our people, kinsfolk, women, children, and the elderly....

"History will have no mercy on anyone. Every individual in this [Arab] nation -- particularly its rulers - must choose the trench it wants to stand in and fight from: Either the trench of Israel, Zionism, the United States (led by the neoconservatives) and the rightist and racist trends allied to them and the forces and regimes that support them militarily, politically, economically, intellectually, diplomatically, ideologically, and through collusion, or the trench of resistance, which is defending land, rights, dignity, honor, history, and identity, and with it all Arab, Islamic, and international opposition forces. There is no third option in this decisive existential equation at this decisive juncture...."

Roebuck